

A BLACK SPARTACUS.

GEN. TOUSSAINT L'OUVERTURE, HAY-TI'S WARRIOR-SLAVE AND LEADER.

The Negro Uprising Contemporaneous With the Revolution in France Found Him in a Cabin—Genius and Character Made Him Master of Santo Domingo.

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same mighty problem confronted him—to still the mad passions of the excited people and bring social order out of anarchy. Yet Napoleon, prince of the whites, murdered Toussaint, prince of the blacks.

The revolution in France extended in all its fierceness to the French colony in Santo Domingo. The white planters arose against the king and preached the liberty of man. The mulattoes imitated them, and the black slaves demanded admittance to the brotherhood of equality. Toussaint was a black slave 50 years old, living in a cabin with a wife and children, a confidential family servant. He could read, and spent his leisure studying the lives of great commanders and political leaders.

When the mulattoes and blacks organized in 1790 to enforce their interpretation of the great doctrine of equality, Toussaint held aloof, conning his Bible, Caesar's "Commentaries," and the military memoirs of Europe. The blacks arose in 1791 and turned the island into a roaring furnace paved with the charred bones of their former masters. Toussaint secreted the family of his master until the holocaust was ended, then conveyed them with a cargo of riches to safety beyond the sea. The chains of slavery having of themselves dropped from his black limbs, he hearkened at last to the oft-ignored cry of his people and marched to their camps.

The humanity of Toussaint in the care of his master was not exceptional. It was his nature, and it placed him under the suspicion of the three chiefs who headed the negroes—Basson, Francois and Jeannot, who were equally unscrupulous and cruel in their war on the whites. The black populace, however, appreciated Toussaint's abilities and character. Though the chiefs at first humbled him by a subordinate appointment (owing for the moment to his personal popularity soon made him a brigadier general, one of three in the negro army, Napoleon was at that time coquetting with Republicans, Royalists and Moderates in Paris, waiting for his star to turn. It turned the day he opened the gates of the directory upon the Paris mob. Toussaint's turned the day he struck the daggers of a mob of blacks from the breasts of a hundred whites doomed to massacre.

The directory sent commissioners to Santo Domingo to regulate its affairs. Word reached the blacks that the commissioners were peaceable, and they sent negro emissaries to the council to talk about peace. "They were captured as emissaries of 'revolted negroes,'" "guilty men and unpatriotic," to whom "justice would be meted out," and were ordered to withdraw from the assembly. The bearers of the olive branch returned to the negro camp where all the army and the civilians hopefully awaited the response to their appeal. Their news was brief. The sigh for peace was changed to blasting breath of war. The same old cry, "Death to the whites!" rang from the lips of the mob, and Basson, the fiery and vindictive black who ruled the army, ordered 100 white prisoners slaughtered in the inclosure of the camp. But there were a cool head and a strong heart in that throng of outraged and ferocious savages. Toussaint pressed his way to his chief, spoke a few calm, firm words, and the fiendish order was recalled.

That deed, with others which followed, bore the name of the Black Spartacus, the French ears. Throughout all the bloody era of uprisings and insurrections the negroes had kept their loyalty to the king. To disarm that devotion the revolutionary assembly of France made the negroes the political equals of the whites, at which the white colonists rebelled, and the mulattoes



joined them as against the blacks. To crown all, Louis XVI was beheaded, and the insurgent slaves went to the side of Spain, which had a footing on the island. Toussaint had passed his apprenticeship in war. He had earned a general's spurs on the field. The Spaniards re-enforced his hand by a division of soldiers, and with the combined force he invaded French territory.

In his first campaign Toussaint laid an ambush and drew into it the opposing commander, General Brancourt, in person. "Write," said the black Spartacus, handing a pen to Brancourt, who was brought before him in bonds, "write, and command your forces to yield." The captive general wrote, leaving it to the discretion of his second in command, Pacot, to fight or yield. "No, no!" roared Toussaint, tearing up the paper. "I must have from you an express order to Pacot to lay down his arms." The order was sent, and the blacks entered the French stronghold of Dondon victors. Other posts fell as the reward of Toussaint's strategy, and finally Marmelade, the key to the French section, was carried after a day's battle.

These military achievements, which were really remarkable in a man reared as a slave until middle life, were crowned by an act of self-sacrificing loyalty and patriotism. Spain was growing in power on one hand, England appeared with armed ships and battalions and seized Port au Prince, the mulattoes and negroes together dominated the richer portions where French power had been reduced to a strip of the

northern cape, and all were contending for supremacy. France was the weaker, clinging by only a thread, a general with a handful of Europeans put up in the fortress of Port au Prince, living on six ounces of bread daily and without ammunition or clothing.

Toussaint was a king in the domain he had conquered. The blacks loved and obeyed him, the mulattoes feared him, and the French and English respected him. The Spaniards, who were his allies, knew him best and respected him most of all. The French as a last resort had proclaimed universal liberty on the island. Spain and England sought conquests only to re-enslave, and the prior right of France was strengthened by her new passion for freedom. Though he distrusted republicans, Toussaint would look to manifest destiny. French domination might mean the complete emancipation of the blacks; Spanish or English promised nothing. His family was secretly conveyed to a safe retreat on the mountainous coast, his camps were put in order, his military lines strengthened, and one day without warning he proclaimed universal liberty and ran up the French flag above the Spanish wherever his arm held sway.

The change of fealty took place in May, 1794. In the February previous the French assembly had decreed Hayti an integral part of France and proclaimed freedom to the negroes. It depended on Toussaint to give force to the decree. Then it was that he added to his name the word Overture, the "opening." With savage impetus he cut an opening in the ranks of his enemies and made a way for his people. With his accession the cause of France looked up. The mulattoes stormed and carried an English fortified post, making booty of 20,000 pounds of powder. Laveaux hadn't a grain in his fortress at Port au Prince and received 8,000 pounds of the capture. Toussaint fell upon his old comrades, the Spaniards, and captured all their posts, then turned upon



"I WOULD HAVE TAKEN YOURS," the English. Several towns succumbed to him, and he laid siege to St. Marc, the English stronghold.

During the siege he was disabled, and treachery in his own camp compelled him to retire. In the mountain fastnesses of the center of the island he gathered his forces and waited for his wound to heal. Then at the head of 5,000 men he carried the English port of San Miguel by storm. Those victories set free the French army under Laveaux, and the mulattoes, blacks and Europeans joined hands. In the successes that followed Toussaint L'Ouverture was the inspiring head.

He left his stronghold Dec. 31 and in four days captured St. English positions. One precipitous height descended with small arms and three cannon was carried by sheer force of physical daring. Unfortunately his enemies outnumbered him, and venturing too far he was surrounded by the mulatto adherents of Spain. He cut his way out and once more returned to his mountains. Under his training the slaves had now become soldiers. They believed in Toussaint as a general and a leader. His appearance and his energy made him a demigod. In one expedition he traveled with relays of horses 150 miles without stopping, and after two hours' sleep was as hale as for battle.

In 1795 the Spanish ceded their claims to France and abandoned the island. Their mulatto adherents, joined with other malcontents, revolted against Laveaux and put him in prison. With 10,000 blacks Toussaint rushed down the mountains, suppressed the revolt and liberated the French commander. Laveaux called his deliverer "The Black Spartacus" and said that the French colors were kept flying in Santo Domingo by "an old negro who seemed to bear a commission from heaven." He appointed Toussaint his lieutenant and second in command, and soon afterward the directory created him deputy governor general and commander in chief. He raised new armies, drove the English from the island, rebuilt towns, fostered agriculture and manufactures, and when Napoleon returned from his eastern campaigns to become first consul Toussaint styled himself the "Napoleon of Santo Domingo."

Napoleon sent him a new commission of commander in chief, and for four years encouraged his absolute reign. But in 1808, in order to rid his armies of troops devoted to his rival Moreau, Napoleon sent General Le Clerc with a force to subdue Santo Domingo. Toussaint looked upon the step as a blow to re-enslave the negroes, and for a long time refused to submit. Meantime blacks and mulattoes arose and slaughtered the white colonists and the French. Toussaint refused to treat with Le Clerc until the French re-embarked, but his colleagues were less heroic, and at last his two chief commanders laid down their arms. Even then Le Clerc feared the old negro. Toussaint agreed to an interview, and they met on neutral ground. Le Clerc was surrounded by a bodyguard of 400 horsemen with drawn sabers. Toussaint entered the square alone. During a peace talk, in which Toussaint declared that he was powerful enough to burn and ravage and could sell his life dearly, Le Clerc looked upon the strange character before him in amazement. "Where would you have got arms to carry on the war?" he inquired after an understanding was reached. "I would have taken yours," was the reply. Le Clerc afterward admitted that Toussaint, who had reached the age of 60, and sent him to France in irons. He was imprisoned in a castle in the Jura mountains by Napoleon's order, where he died mysteriously in April, 1808. The negroes in revenge drove the French from the island, never to return as masters. GEORGE L. KILMER.

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"How much do you charge for a beer?" asked the stranger as he stepped briskly up to the bar.
"Five cents."
"And for some of the lunch on that table?"
"Nothin'."
"Well, I'll take some of the lunch. I don't believe a man ought to drink beer at noon anyhow."—Chicago Record.

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"How did you happen to go to Europe?" asked one man of another on Broadway near Chestnut yesterday afternoon.
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Miss Twilling—"Yes. But it won't be if you wait much longer."—Detroit Free Press.

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